

The Daily Journal

Tobacco-Free Parks in 11 Snohomish County Cities

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SUCCESS!!!

Parks declared tobacco-free for the sake of our kids

The City of Lynnwood is the latest Snohomish County community to freshen the air in its parks when the mayor declared all Lynnwood parks to be tobacco-free September 28, 2005.

Lynnwood joins 10 other Snohomish County cities to support the campaign to educate their local community about the harmful effects of secondhand tobacco smoke and to provide a healthy environment for kids, families and all park users.

The tobacco-free parks project began in 2001 as a joint effort between local communities and Snohomish Health District. At that time, the City of Marysville was approached by Snohomish Health District staff who learned that Marysville was developing a new skateboard park. The Health District had initiated a campaign to highlight the dangers of secondhand smoke centered on bowling

alleys and skateboard facilities due to the known high incidence of tobacco use in these facilities.

From those early meetings, a policy of supporting all community parks, trails, playgrounds, and ball fields being tobacco-free was born. Now that policy has become the norm in 10 additional cities, with other communities working on adopting similar policies.

The Snohomish Health District has assisted in this effort by providing city council members and parks board members with examples of existing tobacco-free parks policies and helping them work through the process of adopting tobacco-free parks proclamations. Staff then helped promote the new policy by helping to write media releases, getting youth involved, planning a kick off ceremony and purchasing signs, frisbees and other educational materials.

“Kids copy what they see adults doing,” said M. Ward Hinds, MD, MPH, Health Officer for Snohomish Health District, at a recent celebration. “If kids see a park free of smokers, they are more likely to recognize this as the norm.” The role modeling of what healthy behavior looks like to kids is one of the most important messages to share.



Tobacco Prevention & Control 2005 Annual Conference

Celebrate tobacco-free parks!!!

